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More information

National park rangers are available to provide information. Don't hesitate to contact them if you need assistance.

Rangers (West)

Jacup/Jerramungup
Tel (08) 9835 5043

Department of Parks and Wildlife Office

13 Morgan Street
Ravensthorpe
Tel (08) 9838 1967

Ranger (East)

Barrens Beach Road
Tel (08) 9838 3060

Department of Parks and Wildlife, Albany District Office

120 Albany Highway, Albany WA 6330
Tel (08) 9842 4500
Fax (08) 9841 7105
Email Albany@dpaw.wa.gov.au

Visit the Department of Parks and Wildlife's website www.dpaw.wa.gov.au for more information on the park.

Other Fitzgerald River National Park brochures include:

- *Eastern short walks*, which includes the short walks to Barrens Lookout, East Mount Barren, Sepulchralis Hill and No Tree Hill)
- *Western short walks*, which includes the short walks to Mount Maxwell, West Mount Barren and the Point Ann Heritage Trail
- *Mamang Walktrail*
- *Hakea Walktrail*



Brochures are available from park entry stations, walktrail heads or download copies from the website:
www.parks.dpaw.wa.gov.au/park/fitzgerald-river

Fitzgerald River National Park podcasts

A series of podcasts about the Fitzgerald River National Park and the different walks can be downloaded prior to visiting the park from the same website.



Department of
Parks and Wildlife



PARKS
PEOPLE

Front cover: Fitzgerald River National Park. Photo – Gordon Roberts/DPaW

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Fitzgerald River National Park



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Information and recreation guide



Department of
Parks and Wildlife



PARKS
PEOPLE

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Above Point Charles Bay.

Fitzgerald River National Park covers an area of 297,244ha on the central south coast of Western Australia, between the towns of Bremer Bay and Hopetoun, 420km south-east of Perth. Recently improved sealed road access and recreational facilities, including two new long walktrails, provide a wide range of opportunities for world class nature-based activities, in highly scenic and diverse coastal and inland environments.

The park is one of the largest and most botanically significant national parks in Australia, with approximately 15 per cent of the State's described plant species growing amid the magnificent landscapes. So far, 1883 plant species have been identified, 75 of which are found nowhere else.

More species of animals live in this national park than in any other reserve in south-western Australia. They include 22 mammal species, 41 reptile species and 12 frog species. The park also has more than 200 bird species including rare species such as the western ground parrot, the western bristle bird and the western whipbird.

In recognition of the importance of protecting and conserving the region's unique flora and fauna, the central area of the park is a wilderness management zone, and is not accessible by vehicles.

Fitzgerald River National Park is an internationally recognised biosphere reserve under the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) *Man and the Biosphere Programme*. The aim of this global initiative is to discover and demonstrate how people and nature can flourish together in a sustainable manner.

Nyoongar (Aboriginal) Cultural Heritage

Nyoongar people occupied and travelled across the park's landscape according to family group territories that spread from the forested regions of the south west to the heathlands of the south coast, east of Esperance. Using the rivers as thoroughfares they moved between these regions to follow the seasonal availability of food. Nyoongar people retain a strong sense of identity and a deep, ongoing connection to their ancestral lands. South coast Nyoongar people continue to camp, fish and care for country in Fitzgerald River National Park. They are actively engaged in preserving their rich cultural heritage and the natural values of the south coast region.

Below Dunnart. **Bottom** Turtle frog. **Below right** *Banksia coccinea*.



Below Whalebone Cove. **Below right** Fitzgerald River National Park.



Access

Park entry fees and daily camping permit fees apply. Drive carefully and please note that speed limits apply on all roads within the park.

Roads may be closed because of conditions that promote the spread of dieback. Please contact a ranger or a department office before your visit to find out about road closures.

From the north

Two gravel roads provide access for two-wheel drive vehicles – Hamersley Drive and Quiss Road/ Pabelup Drive.

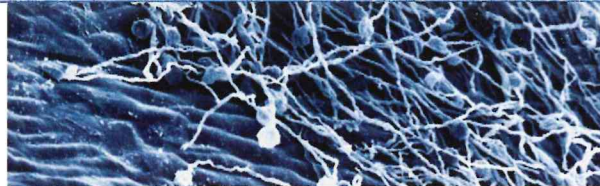
Hamersley Drive from South Coast Highway to Hamersley Inlet Road turnoff offers excellent views into the heart of the park, as well as access to Hamersley Inlet and camp site, Four Mile Beach and camp site, Barrens Beach, Mileys Beach, Cave Point (lookout and trailhead) and West Beach.

Quiss Road and Pabelup Drive traverse undulating landscape and connect to roads leading to West Mt Barren, Point Ann (with whale watching lookouts and trailhead), and St Mary Inlet camp site.

From the east

You can enter the park near Hopetoun via the east entry station on Hamersley Drive, which is sealed to the turnoff to Hamersley Inlet Road. Hamersley Drive provides two-wheel drive access to several eastern precinct coastal recreation sites (see map), including the Hamersley Inlet camp site.

Please note that the four-wheel drive tracks to Whalebone Beach, Quoin Head and the Moir track are frequently closed during wet conditions.



Dieback

Dieback is caused by a pathogen, known as *Phytophthora cinnamomi*, which is lethal to hundreds of plant species. This disease kills plants by destroying their root systems, and threatens many of the park's plant species. The climate of the south coast favours the spread of dieback, which thrives in warm, moist soil and can easily be spread in mud or soil that adheres to vehicle tyres or bush walkers' footwear.

It is therefore sometimes necessary to close roads and tracks or temporarily restrict access to certain areas.

Fitzgerald River National Park is one of the parks least infected by dieback in south-western Australia. With your help it has a chance of remaining so. Bush walkers can help by cleaning mud and soil from their boots before entering a park or reserve, or at the boot-cleaning stations provided at trailhead sites in the park.

When driving in the park, it is essential to keep to established roads and tracks and obey all 'ROAD CLOSED' signs. By washing the tyres and under-body of your car before and after a trip to a park or reserve, you can help preserve WA's natural areas.

From the west

Devils Creek Road enters the western section of the park and can be accessed from the South Coast Highway just north of Gairdner. Pabelup Drive connects Devils Creek Road and Quiss Road. The secondary two-wheel drive road network in the western area of the park is unsealed gravel road. Points of interest accessible by two-wheel drive vehicles include Mt Maxwell, West Mt Barren, Quaalup Homestead, Point Ann and St Mary Inlet. The access track to Trigelow Beach is four-wheel drive only and may be closed during wet conditions.

PLEASE NOTE: The only guaranteed all year, all weather access into the park is on bitumen sealed road from Hopetoun on the east side of the park. The gravel road sections are not suitable for large buses or caravans.





Above *Melaleuca papillosa*. **Above right** Barrens Beach.

Things to do and see

Diverse landscapes, sheltered beaches, rugged sea cliffs, steep ranges, extensive plains and sheer river valleys ending in inlets all provide a variety of nature-based recreational opportunities.

Wildflowers and flora

Wildflowers in the park are a year-round feature of the park's exceptionally diverse floral landscape, but are truly spectacular and abundant in the spring months, August - November.

Whale watching and marine mammals

Southern right whales annually congregate in the shallow bays of the park's coastline from June - October when they give birth, nurse their young and socialise, before migrating back to Antarctic waters for summer feeding. Pods of dolphin, seals and migrating humpback whales are also regularly seen along the coast.

Fishing

Fitzgerald River National Park has many excellent fishing beaches. Keep safety in mind when choosing a site. Wear a self-inflating vest or life jacket when rock fishing. Normal fishing regulations apply.

Camping

Vehicle-based camping is available at Four Mile camp site, Hamersley Inlet camp site (within the Shire of Ravensthorpe reserve), and St Mary camp site. Caravan camping is only available at Hamersley Inlet camp site. Please check the map for locations. Camping permit fees apply; please pay at the self-registration fee paying stations provided at the camp sites.

Basic camp sites are also provided on the long coastal walk trails at Whalebone Beach and Fitzgerald River Inlet. All water, food, toilet paper and camping equipment need to be carried in.


Walking in the Fitzgerald River National Park

Bush walks and beach walks offer scenic vistas of the natural beauty of the park. Please use the boot scrubbers provided at the trailhead boot-cleaning stations and stay on the designated walktrails and footpaths. **Carry ample drinking water. Be prepared for unexpected changes in weather. Bush walking is not recommended in hot and windy or other extreme weather conditions.**

Always tell someone where you are going and when you will return. Please register using the registration books provided at the trail heads. Note that the Department of Parks and Wildlife is not responsible for checking you have returned safely, however the registration process offers a point of reference should something go wrong.


Short Bush Walks in the West

West Mount Barren Summit Trail


 **Class 4 (Moderate difficulty ~ 1.7km return) – allow 1-2 hours.**

This short walk leads to the summit of West Mt Barren and features expansive views over the western region of the park.

Mount Maxwell Lookout

 **Class 2 (Easy ~ 200m return)**
A short amble up to the Mt Maxwell Lookout provides visitors with landscape views to the western peaks.


Point Ann Heritage Trail

 **Class 3 (Easy ~ 1km return) – allow 1 hour**

A gentle walk with interpretation panels along the trail. It features spectacular views over Point Charles Bay and the park's rugged central coastline. In winter, you may see southern right whales visiting the bay. Discover the Aboriginal and European heritage of Point Ann and follow a section of the rabbit proof fence.

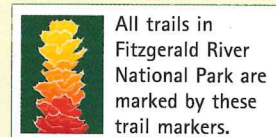
Short Bush Walks in the East

East Mount Barren Summit Trail


 **Class 4 (Moderate difficulty ~ 2.6km return) – allow 2-3 hours.**

This short walk to the summit of East Mt Barren features stunning views over the central park and eastern Barrens Ranges, the Culham Inlet to Hopetoun, and beyond to Esperance.


Above top Walkway at Cave Point. **Above** Roe's rock pool.
Right Point Ann Heritage Trail.




Barrens Lookout

 **Class 3 (Easy ~ 250m return)**
On the short walk from the car park to Barrens lookout, the path winds past a natural rock garden through low coastal heath that is daubed with a wonderful array of colourful wildflowers in spring.

Sepulcralis Hill

 **Class 3 (Easy ~ 600m return)**
Sepulcralis Hill is named after the delicate, weeping gum tree (*Eucalyptus sepulcralis*), which grows in the quartzite ridges of this region of the park. This is a short, easy walk to the lookout which offers scenic views across the Hamersley River valley.

No Tree Hill

 **Class 3 (Moderate difficulty ~ 6 km return) – allow 2-3 hours.**
This is a popular walk during wild flower season.




Walk trail classifications

Parks and Wildlife walk trails are assigned a 'class' to indicate degree of difficulty. The walk classes range from Class 1 (universal access), which is suitable for wheelchairs to Class 5, which requires walkers to be fit, experienced and suitably equipped. Check trailhead signs at the start of walks for specific information.



Long Coastal Walk in the West


Mamang Walktrail from Point Ann to Point Charles and Fitzgerald River Inlet

 **Class 4 (Moderate difficulty ~ 31km return)**
The walktrail passes through beautiful bushland country with spectacular views of Lake Nameless and the central mountain ranges and has encounters with historic sites and spectacular views of the Fitzgerald River beach and inlet. There are basic overnight camp facilities at Fitzgerald inlet. This is a world class walktrail taking you into pristine bushlands, where the unique flora and fauna of the coastal region of the park may be experienced.

Please refer to the Mamang Walktrail brochure for a full explanation of all the walk options for this trail.

Long Coastal Walk in the East

Hakea Walktrail from Cave Point to Quoin Head

 **Class 4 (Moderate difficulty ~ 46km return)**
The walktrail to Quoin Head passes through an array of the region's unique landscape, vegetation and flora which also provides habitat for a rich range of fauna species. You may encounter echidnas, sea eagles, osprey, mallee fowl, dolphins and whales (in season). There are basic overnight camp facilities at the Whalebone camp site near Whalebone beach.

Please refer to the Hakea Walktrail brochure for a full explanation of all the walk options for this walktrail.



Remember

Don't light fires. Gas barbecues are provided free of charge to day visitors at Four Mile Beach, Hamersley Inlet and Point Ann picnic areas.

Be clean. Rubbish bins are not provided in the park; please take your rubbish with you.

Save animals and plants. No hunting or wildflower picking is permitted in Fitzgerald River National Park. Drive slowly to avoid killing wildlife on the roads.

Stay on the road. Follow signs in the park and keep vehicles on the roads marked in this map. Observe track closures and speed limits. To drive a four-wheel drive vehicle on sand, engage four-wheel drive and reduce tyre pressure. Don't forget to re-inflate your tyres when you leave the area. It is recommended that two-wheel drive vehicles are not driven on sand or other soft surfaces.

Be prepared. Always carry plenty of fresh water (at least three or four litres per person per day) as there are no reliable drinking water supplies within the park.

Take care

Keep your personal safety in mind at all times. Caution is required in any natural environment with potentially hazardous terrain. Fitzgerald River National Park is no exception.

Stand back from rocky headlands and cliff edges. Many areas within the park have steep, rocky slopes that can be unstable underfoot.

Choose fishing or swimming sites with great care.

The Southern Ocean is unpredictable, making rock fishing and swimming especially dangerous. Huge waves and swells can suddenly occur even on calm days. Rocks become slippery when wet. Rip currents are common along the coastline.

Wear a lifejacket at all times when fishing from rocks.

No pets

Pets are not permitted in the park. Please leave your dogs, cats and other domestic animals at home as they can harm native wildlife and environment. Foxes and cats are predators to native animals, so the park is baited with 1080 poison to control the numbers of these introduced predators. Native animals are naturally resistant to 1080, but the baits will kill your pets.



Please heed visitor risk warnings shown on signs that display this symbol.